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ABSTRACT

Television archiving is a new field involving the tasks of sorting, preserving, and filing in order to make records available to future historians. Only 5% of all television programing since 1948 exists today on tape or kinescope. Prior to 1968, not even the networks kept a comprehensive file of news shows. Although the DuMont Television Network no longer exists, many of the kinescopes from that network have been saved. Those kinescopes are now available for use by historians to examine the themes of programs and specific references in them that offer insight into the concerns, interests, attitudes, and fears of the people of the late 1940s and early 1950s. A few political programs as well as several adventure and comedy shows are part of the collection. (Portions transcribed from several programs and a television commercial are included.) (TJ)

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THE COMPLETE WRITTEN DRAFT
of
"Archiving Television:
The State of the Art"

A videotape, slide, audio tape presentation given to the History Division of the Association for Education in Journalism Annual Convention, Seattle, Washington, August 1978.

The two dominant media of the 20th Century have a similar plight. Both the motion picture and the video picture are disappearing before our eyes. Dedicated scholars and professionals are now desperately trying to save our visual history. In the process they will be preserving a vital part of America's cultural attitudes and influences. Film and TV have become such a large part of our lives that it would be difficult to understand us and our times without these two facets of our lives. Just try to think of what would represent 20th Century America if films and TV programming were unavailable.

Movies have had a head start in their quest for preservation. This has come about for several reasons. First, movies are older by about fifty years. Second, the medium used for making pictures is not reusable. It cannot be erased and used again. This means we have a lot of film in existence today whether anyone wanted to save it or not. A third reason is a characteristic of the material or stock used for making movies for the first fifty years, i.e., nitrate film stock. Today there is an urgency to find and save as much theatrical and news reel material as possible. The life expectancy[1] of nitrate film *under ideal conditions* is around 60 years. Thus, whatever was put on 35mm film prior to the early 1950's--when safety film replaced nitrate--is on an irreversible timetable towards destruction. Today federal, industrial, and private funds are being used to preserve as much of our film history as possible.

Television as a commercial producer of programming got off the ground after this country had shifted to peace time goals in the late 1940's. The huge growth years for television were 1949 to 1954. Almost from the first broadcast days TV has been a growing influence in our lives and now consumes more of our time than any other waking activity. But through its history there has been an unawareness, a lack of interest, or an inability to save or preserve the material from this powerful means of communications. It is appalling that the first national discussion about archival treatment of video information occurred only six months ago [2/14/78].[2] The Library of Congress invited sixteen institutions, museums and video curators[3] to Washington, D. C. for a conference about TV archives. These individuals or groups independently had already shown an interest in this area of archives.

With such a pervasive medium it would seem vital to save examples and records of this mass media force. Such material would be kept in an orderly manner and made available for scholars and researchers or all disciplines today and in the future. But this is not the case. George Stevens, Jr., Director of the American Film Institute in an address delivered

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a few years ago stated that less than five per cent of all the TV programming aired since 1948 exists today.[4]

You find that hard to believe, but there is a blatant case in point: Milton Berle, the man who singly sold more TV sets than anyone else in show business in the early 1950's has been honored and respected for his contribution to our cultural heritage. But what about the many hours of TV he did? In those early years he produced 580 hours of shows. All live, all recorded on kinescope for distribution purposes. According to an interview on the *Tomorrow Show* with Tom Snyder, all those shows were discarded when the network needed more storage room several years ago. We have only a couple of shows of his now. The rest are gone because of lack of space![5]

In the area of news, prior to 1968, that is *1968*, not 1948 or 1958, not even the networks kept a cohesive or complete file of the tapes or kinescopes of their own newscasts. As you have already learned, it was Vanderbilt College which started taping every newscast on all three networks in the fall of 1968. [The other speaker during this session was Ms Frances Goins Wilhoit of Indiana University. Her topic was "The Vanderbilt Television News Archives" supplemented with an excellent video tape tour and discussion about the archives. That tape is available from Indiana University.] Today CBS and NBC archive all their news material. ABC's policy is not clear to this researcher at this time.

There was another television network which you may not know existed or you may have forgotten about it. In the early days of TV there was also the DuMont Television Network. In the case of DuMont, it had been dead for over a decade and a half before conscious preservation of television programming started. In fact, had it not been for an early day technical limitation of television we may have had nothing to illustrate this network.

Kinescopes were originally produced as a means of storage and distribution of the television material produced at the DuMont Telecenter in New York. Up until April 1956 kines were the only means of holding or preserving a TV image. Another reason for the kinescopes was the lack of national interconnecting phone lines capable of carrying a TV signal across the nation until late 1951. Even after 1952 these lines were not used for all programming, only for special events. Thus the kinescopes were produced and mailed from station to station into the late 1950's.

The material which is now called the Vest Collection was used for making the distribution prints for DuMont. After the prints were made the negative originals were considered expendable in the eyes of the Network. In fact, Metromedia--the "grandson" of DuMont--holds no kinescopes and has virtually no records of the DuMont period.[6] It was during those years that Mr. Peter Vest was a make-up artist at the New York Telecenter. Mr. Vest was permitted to take home what he wanted of the negatives after they had been used.[7] He stored them on his outdoor patio. When the company stopped producing shows in 1956 the majority of the DuMont kinescope library was turned over to a silver reclamation firm, thus destroying the Network's history.

After Peter's death in 1962 members of the family took more than half of the patio collection to the dump. The remaining kinescopes were trucked to a small town in Iowa. Mr. Alan Vest, Peter's brother, stored the collection in Schaller, Iowa in a pop corn warehouse. They remained there for ten years.

This researcher found out about the collection in 1970. In 1973 Mr. Alan Vest agreed to name this researcher the curator of the kinescopes. They were shipped to Pullman, Washington where they were stored at Washington State University. Since then this researcher has tried to find funding to research the collection. Some moral support and some funding did come from the Dean. Although helpful, this did not lead to other grants until 1977. A small grant from the National Endowment for the Arts allowed the dubbing of the negative double system material to video cassettes. This, then, led to a further grant from the National Association of Broadcasters in 1978 for the transcription of all the structured programming in the collection. Further help came in the form of donated equipment time valued at $5000 for SMPTE coding of the entire collection as well as the editing of excerpts for presentation at this convention.

DuMont was not noted for its news coverage. As far as the research shows it had no news department, no news specials, and no documentaries. The collection has not one newscast as such. Conforming to the purpose of kinescoping, there was no reason to record, print, and mail around the nation the brief (five to fifteen minute) news shows. To paraphrase an old line, "There is nothing older than yesterday's TV news."

This does not mean that there is nothing of news value in the collection. In fact, it is to the contrary. Many of the shows were creating news or reporting events of the time whether anyone knew it or not. Although the 1948 national election did involve some television coverage, it was the 1952 election in which television was first used to a meaningful degree. In October of that year Albin Barkley, then Vice President under Truman, used TV to show his support for Adlai Stevenson. To give you first a taste of the times, examine the introduction of the presentation.

> The Stevenson-Sparkman Forum Committee sponsors the following program featuring an address by Vice President Albin W. Barkley speaking on behalf of Adlai Stevenson, Democratic candidate for the office of President of the United States.
>
> Good evening from New Jersey. Tonight the Vice President of the United States, Albin W. Barkley, speaks to the nation by radio and television from his room in the Hotel Plaza in Jersey City. The Vice President has been campaigning vigorously in the east and immediately following this program will join a Democratic dinner rally in the hotel ballroom.
>
> Ladies and gentlemen, the Vice President of the United States.[8]

The presentation is overly formal. The scope of the medium is being made part of the presentation as well as the message itself.

In 1952 the United States was involved in the Korean War, or, as some preferred to call it, the Korean Conflict. This topic was a great concern to many families around the nation because sons and fathers were currently fighting there. Barkley explores the topic during this half hour monologue.

> . . . Governor Stevenson has had more experience in international relationships, has had an opportunity to make more friends among the leaders of other nations, and has a fuller and sounder

> understanding of our foreign policy than any other man who has been elected president and a sounder and fuller comprehension of it than any other man now seeking the office of President of the United States. He has integrity, he has courage, he has faith in the American people. He is deeply religious and conscious of our relationship as human beings to our Maker and as children of a great God, he recognizes our duty and our reliance on and our obligation to the Maker of man and the Creator of the Universe. He believes in peace, he has helped solve the problems of peace. He will devote himself, if elected, to a greater effort and a greater responsibility in serving the American people and the world to bring about universal peace. And may I quote substantially a statement made only two or three days ago by an outstanding senator, Senator Wayne Morse of Oregon, when he stated that inasmuch as General Eisenhower had become surrounded by, and is now under control of the reactionary forces which are at hand all the time as his advisors, that he is certain that the chances are greater if he should be elected President of the United States that there should be a third war because those who are surrounding him and who are advising him, are confident that another war must take place with Russia. That is the language not of me; it is the language of a Republican senator.[9]

The style of speaking is that of the orator of the past. Flowery wording and complex sentence structure were considered marks of a knowledgable man. The traditional influence of debate and rhetoric were a liability in the new meduim of television. Added to this was the fact that Barkley was not a dynamic speaker.

The speech reveals Barkley's unawareness of the intimacy and broad base of the medium. In one particlar word there is a classic example of the mismatch of Barkley and the medium. Barkley uses the word "eleemosynary" twice during the presentation. Eleemosynary means alms or charity. The use of such a sophisticated word reflect Barkley's blind- to his audience, the general public.

> . . . Graft and corruption had become rampant in the government of Illinois. Her public institutions had degenerated, her public highways had deteriorated, her mental and eleemosynary and penal institutions had become the prey of corrupt politics.[10]

In the collection of DuMont material Eisenhower never appears, but Stevenson is in several programs. There are rallies as well as "fireside chats." In these early days of TV politics no one fully understood the impact of this electronic marvel. The public could compare what was being said with what he or she experienced outside the living room. Stevenson tried to joke about the tide of the election in the last days. Too many people were aware the swing was towards Ike, not away from him. In retrospect this Stevenson joke is a voice of doom for his campaign.

> The Ike buttons are falling off the lapels the way the autumn leaves [CROWD BREAKS INTO APPLAUSE AND DROWNS OUT STEVENSON]. I never even got a chance to make my good joke. [CROWD LAUGHS] I said, the Ike buttons were falling off lapels like leaves of the autumn trees. [CROWD BREAKS INTO WILD APPLAUSE AGAIN][11]

During the same speech from Boston, Massachusetts, in the latter part of October, Stevenson portrayed the Republican stand on the issues of the day.

> Let us consider for a moment what the Old Guard is saying about our country. And I mean what they are <u>really</u> saying after you take the frosting off their words. They are saying that our economy is weak and feeble; that our good times are based on spending for war; that we are afraid of peace because peace will mean depression. They are saying that Americans have lost their freedom; that their government has made them slaves. They are saying that we are wasting our substance on military and economic aid to those who are holding the line against Communism abroad and for defense at home. And that's what the Old Guard and its candidate are saying to the American people. But they are not the only voices which are saying these things of America. Other voices are saying the same things; that our people are oppressed; that our prosperity is based on war; that we have lost our freedom; that we should cut down on foreign aid and on our own defense. And these other voices are the voices of the most evil and malignant force that is loose in the world today. The force of world Communism. Now lest you misunderstand me, I don't suggest for a moment that this coincidence proves that the Republican Old Guard is infiltrated by Communist agents. I'll leave that kind of an argrument to the Old Guard itself.[12]

Stevenson also comments on the true cause of the war in Korea. He appeared to go deeper than just subject dropping. Rather he made a stand about the subject.

> The General has announced his intention to go to Korea, but, my friends, the root of the Korean problem does not lie in Korea. It lies in Moscow. [ROARS OF APPLAUSE][13]

There was a lacing of the "poison" word Communism when he talked about the Old Guard. In 1952 fear of secret Communists within the U.S. Government was beginning to grow. This wave of fear was to crest in 1954 with the famous televised Joseph McCarthy hearings (offically called the Army/McCarthy hearings). It would be fair to say that many people were running scared during 1954, but even two years before it was wise to take a stand on "Commies." Stevenson did just that during the same speech from Boston.

> As I've repeatedly said in this campaign, if I find any Communists, or fellow travelers, or Soviet agents, or dupes in our federal government, I will root them out and promptly and ruthlessly. And I shall rely on such experienced guardians of our security as J. Edgar Hoover of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and General Bedel Smith of the Central Intelligence Agency.[14]

Some of the shows in the collection are important not only from the political history perspective, but also from a TV history point of view. Such is the case during the opening of another of Stevenson's political rallies.

> Good evening from the world famous Mormon Tabernacle in Salt Lake City, Utah. Tonight in his first visit to Utah, Governor Adlai Stevenson continues his campaign to talk sense to the American people. Governer Stevenson addresses an overflow crowd here and a nation-wide audience in the first national network telecast to originate from Salt Lake City.[15]

The focus of the current research is not just the news and the events which make them. The focus is on the attitudes expressed by the actors, the situations, and the plotlines. These attitudes came out of our culture. How did America feel about life? How did America react to people of different ethnic backgrounds? What were our fears? What made us laugh? The answers to questions like these give today's researchers and scholars more of an insight into the social make up of America at that point in time.

We tend to forget what we were like. Conversely, we are unable to see what we are like at this time because we have no objective perspective while experiencing our lives. It is only by studying something which was captured at that time and unaltered through time that we have a clue to our past selves. This is true not only for the individual but also for the culture. The programming on TV, as with films, books, newspapers, comic books, etc., reflect some of the attitudes of the time in which they were created.

In the early 1950's the easy enemies in programs were the Japanese and the Chinese. Recall that it was only five or six years after World War II in which the US had conquered the Japanese. At the same time the public was becoming very concerned about the Chinese because of the political ties with Russian communism. Thus this expression in the programming was a reflection of the culture. These two excerpts are from the popular children's show *Captain Video*.

> RANGER: I've been pretty busy, Captain. I've had to change my altitude and course twice to by-pass a couple hurricanes.
> CAPT. VIDEO: Why didn't you fly over the hurricanes?
> RANGER: Well, Blakeley's eye sight was responsible for that, sir.
> CAPT. VIDEO: I don't get you, Ranger. What do you mean?
> RANGER: Well, he saw a plane which he thought to be a Japanese Zero flying the same course that we're flying only at about 18,000 feet.
> CAPT. VIDEO: That's really strange. Did you check that with the Bureau of Aviation?
> RANGER: Yes sir, Captain. They say they have no clearance to any such plane on any such course. We had to by-pass him, though, Captain. I didn't want to give him a good look at our markings.
> CAPT VIDEO: Well, did you see the markings on his plane?
> RANGER: Well, yes, sir. They were pretty blurred like he had painted all over, but I could see the emblem of the rising sun shining through.
> CAPT. VIDEO: I get you. All right . . . .[16]

It's obvious that the mysterious plane is up to no good. The Japanese war plane was trying to hide itself. At the same time the Ranger didn't want to reveal his identity while trying to do some good deed for the Captain.

Another show takes place in Shanghai. The Captain meets people of the Chinese race. Although a man named Mu Ting Song appears to be helping Captain Video, the Captain cannot be sure. It is difficult to see through the expressionless face of the Chinese. Mu Ting Song talks about the two-facedness of some Chinese people in Shanghai.

> MU TING SONG: I am called Mu Ting Song. My tong and all other members of Dancing Bear tong will help you combat evil forces of Sung Ching Sing.
> CAPT. VIDEO: Evil forces?
> MU TING SONG: Sung Ching Sing is most evil, Capt. Video. He claims to hate bloodshed and I know he would not hurt a fly, but he hurts men. He has taken advantage of disasters to loot and pillage, he has smuggled the flowers of forgetfulness, he has caused men to be murdered. Behind the gentle face lies a cold cruel will. These were found on the steps of my tong headquarters. [HE HANDS CAPT. VIDEO A GUN AND SOME PAPERS] This is a declaration of war, Capt. Video. If Sun Ching Sing turns loose his bandits Shanghai may not know peace for years.[17]

The message contained within the programming was not always clear and cohesive. There were incongruities. While on one hand the message was supporting the disgust of the Japanese and Chinese, an announcement promoted the concept of freedom from prejudice. Again from *Captain Video*.

> ANNOUNCER: We'll return to our story in just one minute. Boys and girls all over America and many women, too, are signing the Freedom Scroll because they believe in liberty for people everywhere. Here are the words in the Freedom Scroll, your message to all the world: "I believe in the sacredness and dignity of the individual. I believe that all men derive the right to freedom equally from God. I pledge to resist aggression and tyrany wherever they appear on earth. I am proud to enlist in the crusade for freedom. I am proud to help make the Freedom Bell possible, to be a signer of this declaration of freedom, to have my name included as a permanent part of the Freedom Shrine in Berlin, and to join with the millions of the people throughout the world who hold the cause of freedom sacred." Rangers, if you haven't signed the Freedom Scroll and joined the crusade for freedom, check the crusade committee in your town. Ask how you can join hands with millions of your fellow Americans in this crusade for freedom. Now once again let's return to our story.[18]

It is easy to say that these examples come only from children's programming. Thus they are not important. But what group within the culture is more impressionable than the youth? Also, there has to be some villian somewhere and why not one which was in everyone's mind only a few years before. These considerations should be taken into account, but examples are not limited to the children's programming. Jackie Gleason worked for DuMont before he went to CBS. During a monologue he joked about the threads of totalitarian forces. He used Stalin as the example.

JACKIE GLEASON: Now this book, believe me, ladies and gentlemen, this is the book. Now the reason this book is interesting is because it was written by Stalin. Stalin wrote this book and in it he tells about what the real true aims of the Communist Party is. He says that he doesn't want to hurt anybody. It's not his intention to harm anyone. He doesn't want to-[THE BOOK EXPLODES IN HIS HAND. THE AUDIENCE BREAKS INTO GREAT LAUGHTER AND APPLAUSE][19]

This seems to reflect an intolerant point of view. Certain races were to be eyed with suspicion, different forms of government were primarily intended to destroy our form of government. And yet there are inconsistencies in what appears in the collection. This would tend to illustrate some confusion in attitudes about different people and different forms of government. Again from *Captain Video*.

ANNOUNCER: We'll return to our story in just one minute, Rangers. Rangers, did you ever think what it would be like traveling along in an open car without a windshield? Well, you wouldn't go very far before you got all splattered with mud and you'd have to keep your eyes closed so as not to be blinded by the dust. Well, when you're traveling along in life, Rangers, common sense acts as a pretty important windshield. It lets you see where you're going and at the same time it keeps you from getting splattered from the mud of prejudice. Now suppose you've made pals with some fellow, maybe he goes to a church that's different from yours, or his folks come from a different country, or his skin is of a different color. Will these differences get in your way? Of course not. If fact, you know what he's like inside, you know he's fun to be with, he likes the same games and goes for the same hobbies and sticks up for you like a real pal. Well, that's how your common sense acts like a windshield, Rangers. As long as you use it no one can throw dust in your eyes. Now let's get back to our story.[20]

Returning to the topic of Communism, during the early 1950's the fear of Communism dominated the consciences of Americans during those formative years of television. Another show from the collection contains both technical as well as cultural information. *On Location* was done live and on location. More importantly the theme of the show is revealing. Two men at a paint factory do not get along. The friend of the bully overhears two FBI agents talking about the hero. What comes out of this misunderstanding and misinterpretation is the crux of the story.

MATT [FRIEND OF THE BULLY]: And the FBI guy says, "We didn't have no doubts about him, Chief, but the FBI always checks 'em first." Sure.
BEEF [THE BULLY]: No.
MATT: So help me.
BEEF: Well, what are they after him for? Well? You heard no more?
MATT: Yeah. I heard more.
BEEF: Well?

MATT: I don't want —
BEEF: Yeah. Come on. Spill it!
MATT: I think he's a Commie, you know, one of those subversives.
BEEF: The dirty rat. The dirty rotten rat.[21]

There are other topics or attitudes which seep through the material. Because of the great changes in the role of women and thus the attitude towards women, the way women are referred to and treated in the collection is most interesting.

Rocky King Detective was a popular show for DuMont. It involved a non-violent, non-"macho" cop who figured out each case because of his brains and logic. He was a sort of a cross between Chief Ironside and Detective Columbo. The format of the show was very strict. It always opened with a conversation between Rocky King and his wife, Mabel--who was never on camera. The following attitude about the ability of women must have hit a familiar chord for the stereotype of women.

ROCKY KING: Oh, yes, sure, I feel fine. I had plenty of sleep.
MABEL KING: Well then take a look at those checks I wrote for the bills. I don't think you'll find a mistake in any of them.
ROCKY: Well, I hope not. We've had a little trouble, you know. December 12th, Dolan & Strauss, $22.50. Written correctly, yeah. What was that for?
MABEL: For that print dress I wore to Mrs. Murphy's birthday party.
ROCKY: Well, you need a new dress once in awhile. Let's see. Taylor & Company, $14.95. That was for my new shoes.
MABEL: Well, you need new shoes once in awhile.
ROCKY: Yes, I do That's right. The rest of these look all right. Now I'll take a look at your check book. That's where I find out how much money you've got left.
MABEL: Oh, I'm sure that's right too. Although I didn't fix it until after I'd written all the checks.
ROCKY: Well, you shouldn't do that, Mabel. You know that's the way you make mistakes when you do — And you did! Date: 22 50. Balance: $83.00. December 12th subtracted from the balance leaves $71.00.
MABEL: Correct.
ROCKY: It is not! You should have subtracted $22.50, not December 12th, the date, from your balance.
MABEL: Oh, did I do that?
ROCKY: Yes. You did!
MABEL: Oh, then don't look at it anymore. I'll go to the bank and find out where I stand.[22]

From another show a man who plans to marry the girl expresses his opinion of where he thinks his gal should be. There are also references about a woman's ability to control her sexual desires in this excerpt.

JERRY: . . . You know I don't intend to be a welder all my life. I'm going to make something of myself.
FLOSSY: Of course you are, Jerry. Of course you are.
JERRY: I'm going to make a home for you and you're going to be in that home all the time. All of the time. And not in some factory like this or any other one.
FLOSSY: Oh, Jerry. [SHE TRIED TO KISS HIM]
JERRY: Hey, hey you. Hey, not here.
FLOSSY: I don't care. Kiss me.
JERRY: No. Supposin' someone were to see us? Huh?
FLOSSY: Kiss me! I said, kiss me!
JERRY: [HE GIVES HER A LIGHT KISS] That's all you get for now. Look, run along or you'll be late. [HE GIVES HER A PAT ON THE BOTTOM] Go on. Beat it. Scoot, scoot.[23]

And what about the attitudes toward blacks or Negroes as they were called at that time. Although a statistical analysis of the number of actors in the collection compared to those who happened to be black has not been done, there is a disproportionate imbalance against the blacks. There are no more than ten situations involving blacks in the over one hundred shows in the collections A part of the collection untouched is all boxing and wrestling. It will be interesting to see what proportions in terms of racial mix come out of those kinescopes.

One of the examples involving blacks is the Mombo Aces. This is a young group of black boys playing drums. The lighting is very low angle so there is a strong "jungle" or "native" mood to the mombo numbers. When the performance is over Johnny Olson complimented the group by saying, "I like your spirit."[24]

In another show Ted Mack is talking with a black musician. He is a high school student from Boston.

TED MACK: . . . It says here that you're a track runner at English High School and that you've equaled every record in school. Right?
LOUIS WOLCOTT: Yes, I hope to break some next year when I put on a little more weight.
MACK: You do, huh?
WOLCOTT: Yes.
MACK: How about your violin? Can you play that as fast as you can run?
WOLCOTT: Well, not quite, but I've got a lot to learn and I hope to break some records with this some day.
MACK: You're just a champion at heart, aren't you, aren't you?[25]

Being black and being an althete put an individual into some sort of a different class. This individual is respected because he has pulled himself up by his boot straps. Jackie Robinson was such a black. He was not an equal, but he was an accepted black. Accepted to the point of being condescending in the way he is described. In 1950 Jackie Robinson was on the *Cavalcade of Stars*. The following excerpt is part of a skit done to honor him.

ANNOUNCER: Yes, this is the Jackie Robinson story, but it's not his story alone. It's one that each of us shares, a victory. A victory that can only happen in a country that is really free. A country where every child has the opportunity to become President or play baseball for the Brooklyn Dodgers.

ROBINSON: You see, Billy, every dream in my head came true. Yours will too. Do you want to play catch now?

BILLY: No thanks, Mr. Robinson. I got two strikes against me. [HE IS REFERRING TO BEING IN A WHEEL CHAIR. THERE IS SOMETHING WRONG WITH HIS LEGS. POSSIBLY POLIO.]

ROBINSON: Billy, I've been playing baseball for a long time and I know there's a lot of things a kid can do with two strikes on him. He can stand in there and let the third strike pass him by or he can keep his eye on the ball, take a healthy cut at it, and knock it out of the ballpark. Now what would you do?

JERRY LESTER: Yeah, yeah, Billy. What would you do?

BILLY: I think I know. [HE TAKES THE BALL AND TOSSES IT TO ROBINSON]

LESTER: Strike one!

[APPLAUSE AND CURTAINS CLOSE][26]

Also in the collection are the formative days of many famous people of the past and today. Some of them were big names in other circles, some were to become famous long after DuMont had been hauled off for silver reclamation. Just to give you a sample of some of the names found in the collection already the following list is offered. There are many more. Some of the people played such small parts in a given show they were not named in the credits. The identification takes time and patience.

Jackie Gleason	Jerry Lester
Rogers & Hammerstein	Eddie Fisher
The Ames Brothers	Dennis James
Al Capp	Chris Schenkle
Morey Amsterdam	Paul Winchell
Mercedes McCambridge	Victor Borge
Art Carney	Ted Mack
Montgomery Clift	Jean Stapleton
Smith & Dale	Jerry Lewis
Tallulah Bankhead	Jane Mansfield
Carl Reiner	Frank Blair
Jay Carroll Nash	Jack Klugman

One of the most exciting finds to date is in the series *Charlie Wild Detective*. The show is dated to the early summer, maybe the first two weeks of June 1952. At that time the fear of Communism was growing, but the truth of the witch hunt syndrome was not at all clear to the public. In this example all the character development and subplot have been cut out so you can understand what this story has to say.

CHARLIE WILD: This is a story about a guy who almost lost his most precious possession. Remember a guy by the name of Shakespeare once said, "He who steals my purse steals trash, but he who steals my good name, steals that which is most precious to me." So this is the story of a man who almost lost his good name. And I call it the "Case of the Red Letter."

. . . . . .

MRS. FRANKLIN: . . . George, listen. "Dear Mrs. Franklin: I think you should know something about your husband's past activities and the fact that he may still be involved in those activities."
GEORGE: You're kidding.
MRS. FRANKLIN: "He's a member of and has supported the cause of many subversive organizations. There are some people who believe he may be a Red."
GEORGE: Who wrote that? Let me see this thing.
MRS. FRANKLIN: It's unsigned.

. . . . . .

GEORGE: Well, there was a private detective. The firm used him once, impressed me as being a pretty good man. What was his name? Wild, Wild, Charlie Wild.

. . . . . .

MR. MORRELL [GEORGE'S BOSS] George, I, well —
GEORGE: Yes, sir?
MORRELL: To be truthful a very distrubing thing has come to my attention.
GEORGE: Disturbing?
MORRELL: Yes. You see I received a letter. Now, normally I would pay no attention to it because it was unsigned.
GEORGE: Unsigned? Don't, don't tell me I was accused of being a Red?
MORRELL: Why, yes. That's it, more or less. How did you know?
GEORGE: My wife received a letter to that same effect this morning.
MORRELL: Your wife? There may be other letters.
GEORGE: Mr. Morrell, you don't believe this, do you?
MORRELL: George, it's not a question of whether I believe it or not. I'm not in business, I'm not concerned with the merits or demerits of the accusation.
GEORGE: You're not?
MORRELL: The important thing to me is that a story like this spreads in whispers and undertones.

. . . . . .

WILD: I, look, Mr. Franklin, I'm not trying to drum up trade, of course, but if anyone wrote a letter like this about me I'd want to know who was at the bottom of it.
GEORGE: Well, I wouldn't.
MRS. FRANKLIN: George.
GEORGE: Please, Marge, I don't want to talk about it any more.
MRS. FRANKLIN: George, why are you home at this hour of the day?
GEORGE: I resigned.
MRS. FRANKLIN: Resigned?

. . . . . .

GEORGE: Mr. Wild, there's a mortgage on this house. We've got to eat, wear clothes. This way I can at least look for another job without having any stigma attached to me.
WILD: But heavens, man, this is a lie. There is no stigma against you and your wife.

. . . . . .

MRS. FRANKLIN: And you'll help us, Mr. Wild?
WILD: You couldn't drag me away with wild horses. I'm in this to the end.
GEORGE: Well, I've got enough money.
WILD: Don't worry about the money. This is a case of self-protection.
GEORGE: Self-protection?
WILD: Of course, man. If anyone as innocent as you can be taken in and crucified, then no one's safe, including myself. No sir, I won't be content until this owner of the poison pen is in the federal pen, where, by heavens, he belongs.

. . . . . .

WILD: Look, I'm sorry, Mr. Morrell, but I get burned up about this. I'm sorry. You as a citizen have no right to pass judgment on a fellow citizen. Great places, many places in this world a man's guilty 'til he can prove he's innocent. But not in the United States of America. In America you are innocent until they prove you're guilty. It's the law of the land. Look, I'm, I'm a private cop. Yes, I, I get evidence against people. Yes, I arrest people. Yes. But that's where my job is finished. Mr. Morrell, judgment belongs to the law.

. . . . . .

WILD: Well, there it is, Sweetheart. Mr. Stoddard's case comes up in federal court in about three weeks. What with matching up the typewriter and the letters and the phone calls, we think we have a case against him. But then again we're in the good old USA. He ain't guilty until the judge and jury find him so. But if they do, I hope they put him away for a long time. Because a lot of people including yours truly will sleep a lot sounder. Goodnight, Sweetheart.[27]

Finally, here is a sample of work from an industry which was younger than television itself. Television advertising was not much more than illustrated radio ads in the early days. Everyone is aware of how much that has changed over the last twenty eight years! Some of those very early ads revealed the innocence of the profession along with the gullability of the public. There is also a culture attitude about woman's dependence upon men in this advertisement for Heed deodorant.

ANNOUNCER: Listen, they're whispering all over town.
WOMAN #1: Mary lost her man.
WOMAN #2: Yes, because of *that* she got the brushoff.
WOMAN #1: Because of *that*.
WOMAN #2: Because of *that*.
WOMAN #1: Because of *that*.
WOMAN #3: She thought she was safe but her deodorant let her down. Don't you run the risk of deodorant failure. Stop perspiration with Heed. The amazing new underarm spray in a flexible squeeze bottle. Heed stops underarm perspiration, prevents odor, gives day-long protection. No other type deodorant, no cream, or old-fashioned liquid gives such effective complete protection so quickly. One spray of Heed is worth a dozen dabs. Heed is so easy to use and it really works. Don't risk deodorant failure. Why risk unhappienss.
WOMAN #1: Because of *that*.
WOMAN #2: Because of *that*.
WOMAN #1: Because of *that*.

WOMAN #3: Get Heed, America's fastest selling underarm spray deodorant. Never be Heedless and you'll always be safe.[28]

The state of the art of television archiving? We are just beginn'ng. Because of the scope of programming already past and continually being produced we have a huge task before us. It will be impossible to save everything. But if we as researchers and scholars do not make the effort NOW to preserve our video history this almost disposable medium, then who will ever know what we were like? There is no question that there is a wealth of information in the programming as long as it exists so we and our children's children can see it, laugh at it, and hopefully learn from it.

Footnotes

[1]Karr, Lawrence F., "Film Preservation: Why Nitrate Won't Wait," I.A.T.S.E. Official Bulletin (Summer 1972): Reprint, p.3.

[2]Letter from Erik Barnouw, Film & Television Specialist, Motion Picture Section, Library of Congress, 29 December 1977.

[3]Ibid. Representatives were invited from the following institutions: Academy of Television Arts & Sciences, American Film Institute, George Washington University, International Museum of Photography at George Eastman House, Library of Congress, Museum of Broadcasting, Museum of Modern Art, National Archivies & Records Service, Public Television Service Library, Rhode Island Historical Society, University of California at Los Angeles, University of Georgia, Vanderbilt Television News Archive, Washington State University, Wisconsin Center for Film & Theatre Research. I was the representative from Washington State University which at that time was home for the Peter Vest Collection of Kinescopes from the DuMont Television Network. There were no published proceedings from the meeting.

[4]Remarks of George Stevens, Jr., Director of The American Film Institute, at the Popular Culture Association National Meeting, 21 March 1975, St. Louis, Missouri, unpublished.

[5]NBC, The Tomorrow Show, 6 August 1977, host: Tom Snyder; guest: Milton Berle.

[6]Letter from Thomas M. Reed, Jr., Director-Corporate & Investor Relations, Metromedia, 13 June 1978.

[7]Letter from Alan Vest (brother of Peter), 9 January 1978.

[8]The Peter Vest Collection, Stevenson/Sparkman Forum, Tape 5, Cut 1, Pullman, Wash., ca. 24 October 1952.

[9]Ibid.

[10]Ibid.

[11]The Peter Vest Collection, Adlai Stevenson Rally, Tape 5, Cut 2, Pullman, Wash., ca. 27 October 1952.

[12]Ibid.

[13]Ibid.

[14]Ibid.

[15]The Peter Vest Collection, Adlai Stevenson Forum, Tape 35, Cut 1, Pullman, Wash., ca. 15 October 1952.

[16]The Peter Vest Collection, Captain Video, Tape 2, Cut 1, Pullman, Wash., date undetermined.

[17]The Peter Vest Collection, Captain Video, Tape 2, Cut 2, Pullman, Wash., ca. June 1951.

[18]Ibid.

[19]The Peter Vest Collection, Cavalcade of Stars, Tape 9, Cut 1, Pullman, Wash., date undetermined.

[20]Captain Video, Tape 2, Cut 2.

[21]The Peter Vest Collection, On Location: Dark of Night, Tape 10, Cut 1, Pullman, Wash., date undetermined.

[22]The Peter Vest Collection, Rocky King, Detective, Tape 19, Cut 2, Pullman, Wash., ca. 14 December 1954.

[23]On Location: Dark of Night, Tape 10, Cut 1.

[24]The Peter Vest Collection, Kids and Company, Tape 7, Cut 1, Pullman, Wash., ca. 7 June 1952.

[25]The Peter Vest Collection, Ted Mack Amateur Hour, Tape 14, Cut 2, Pullman, Wash., ca. 17 May 1949.

[26]The Peter Vest Collection, Cavalcade of Stars, Tape 13, Cut 1, Pullman, Wash., ca. 25 May 1950.

[27]The Peter Vest Collection, Charlie Wild, Detective, Tape 46, Cut 2, Pullman, Wash., ca. May-June 1952.

[28]Cavalcade of Stars, Tape 9, Cut 1.